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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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Different Generations and the Challenge of Leadership – Does this Matter?

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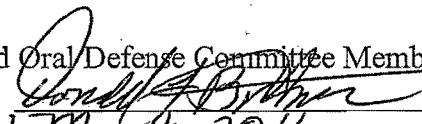
**AUTHOR:**

Lieutenant Colonel Bridget V. Hamacher, USAF

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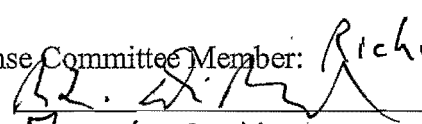
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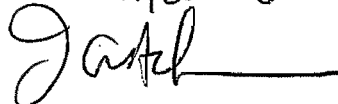
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## Executive Summary

**Title:** Different Generations and the Challenge of Leadership – Does this Matter?

**Author:** Lieutenant Colonel Bridget V. Hamacher, USAF

**Thesis:** Different generations are a leadership challenge. Given the different generations in the workplace today and how they view the world, leaders need to understand the differences so that they can use them to ensure the mission – whatever that may be – is accomplished.

**Discussion:** With four different generations in the workplace, there are bound to be different perspectives, priorities, and methods of working that can lead to misunderstandings, tension, and even disagreements. This paper explains those different generations and then looks at why leaders in the military should be aware of the differences. A few hot topics such as feedback, mentoring, and combat are examined in the context of generational differences.

The four generations discussed in this paper are: Veterans (1922-1943), Baby Boomers, (1943-1960), Generation Xers (1960-1980) and Millennials (1980-2000). Each generation has its own personality that is defined by the events and conditions experienced during that generation's formative years. Veterans are described as loyal, patriotic, and hard working. Baby Boomers are optimistic and competitive while Generation Xers are self-reliant and skeptical. Millennials are confident and technologically savvy. Veterans grew up in the era of the Great Depression, Second World War, and Korean War. Through their hard work, they rebuilt our country in to what it is today. Baby Boomers were born to Veteran Generation parents who wanted to provide opportunities for their children that they did not have. Generation Xers have lived in the shadow of the Baby Boomers and Millennials are the most coddled and doted upon generation of the four.

Generational leadership matters because the differences amongst the generations can cause stereotypes that impede mission effectiveness. Furthermore, over 65% of the US military today is comprised of Millennials; however, Baby Boomers are the ones who wield most of the power in the military. How then do leaders connect the generations? By understanding, recognizing, and embracing the differences, leaders can harness the differences to enhance their units' teamwork and ultimately, mission effectiveness.

**Conclusion:** The leader's responsibility is to motivate those within a unit to accomplish the mission. Understanding, recognizing, and embracing how the different generations view the world around them will assist leaders at every level in leading their people.

## *Table of Contents*

	<b>Page</b>
PREFACE.....	iv
SETTING THE STAGE.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
THE GENERATIONAL GAP.....	2
GENERATIONAL PERSONALITIES.....	4
Veterans.....	4
Baby Boomers.....	6
Generation X.....	8
Millennials.....	9
Beyond the Millennials.....	12
WHY DOES THIS MATTER?.....	13
Feedback.....	14
Mentoring.....	17
Combat.....	18
CONNECTING THE GENERATIONAL GAP.....	20
CONCLUSIONS.....	22
APPENDIX A – GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY.....	24
APPENDIX B – RESILIENCE TRAINING DEFINITIONS.....	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	26
END NOTES.....	29

## *Preface*

A few years ago, I was the Chief of Military Equal Opportunity at an overseas base. It was a “fuzzy” job within my career field and, while not at the top of my list of positions to have, it was the one from which I learned the most. That always seems to be the case. While there, I gained knowledge on what the protected categories (based on US anti-discrimination laws) are such as race, color, sex, national origin, and religion. However, I also discovered that leadership is more than making sure no one violates the anti-discrimination laws. It’s about taking the talents of everyone in your organization and maximizing them to accomplish the mission. I also learned that sometimes a commander – usually an O-4 and above – and a junior member of the squadron – say an E-1 or E-6 – might be speaking in English but also in different languages (i.e. meaning and understanding) about a particular topic given their generational differences.

This paper examines the four different generations in the workplace today. From the 18-year-old Basic Airman to the 65-year-old civilian, there is a generational gap in the workplace. How does a commander deal with this and ensure the talents of these two individuals and everyone in between are leveraged to ensure mission success? To meet this challenge does not mean to replace the fundamental principles of leadership that a commander has learned over time. Rather, it is meant to be another tool in the commander’s toolbox. Ultimately, if commanders can use this information to motivate all members of their unit, then a win-win situation ensues: the different generations can comprehend each other, personnel do not feel left out, and each generation puts forth its best effort to ensure mission success.

We are all products of many different factors – background, culture, and race to name a few. This paper will not address differences in the workplace created by different cultures, backgrounds, races, or gender for that would be beyond the scope and page length limitations of

it. Rather, it will concentrate on the different generations represented in the “workplace” of the contemporary military services.

What started as a theoretical, academic exercise will soon become a practical application for me: shortly after graduating from Command and Staff College, I will assume command of a squadron. That squadron has all four generations represented and I look forward to learning with them!

Those that know me know what a challenge a project like this is for me. Thank you to the Gray Research Center Staff for their expert assistance in finding books and articles to further my research. Also, thanks to Dr. Donald Bittner for your support and guidance and for allowing me to study this topic more. Special thanks to two Millennials who have taught this Generation Xer a thing or two – my sister, Shereen and my friend, Jason Yaley. I now understand you better after doing this research! And finally, many thanks to my fiancé, Dave, who is currently deployed to Iraq. Your unwavering support in this endeavor has helped me fulfill a goal that I once thought nearly impossible.

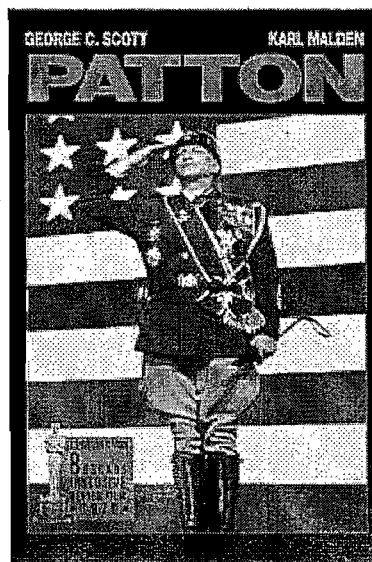


## Setting the Stage

The film “Patton” was released in 1970. George C. Scott portrays General George Patton during World War II. The film is a classic – it won eight Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Actor in 1970 – and is still quoted today by many military and movie buffs.

In the opening scene, General George Patton stands in front of a large United States flag while addressing his men on the eve of a battle in World War II. He tells them: “Men, all this stuff you’ve heard about America not wanting to fight, wanting to stay out of the war, is a lot of horse dung. Americans traditionally love to fight. All real Americans love the sting of battle.” He then goes on to say, “Americans love a winner and will not tolerate a loser. Americans play to win all the time. I wouldn’t give a hoot in hell for a man who lost and laughed. That’s why Americans have never lost, and will never lose a war: because the very thought of losing is hateful to Americans.”<sup>1</sup>

This movie was released in 1970, amidst the Vietnam War. How would such a speech be received today? Was there a generational gap during Patton’s time? How did the different generations perceive the movie?



*"Leadership is the art and science of influencing and directing people to accomplish the assigned mission."  
-Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1<sup>2</sup>*

## INTRODUCTION

A leader in any organization is charged with directing people to accomplish a mission. In the military, that mission is to potentially fight and die for our country. How does a leader lead the youngest enlistee to the oldest member of their organization? Does one type of management work for the oldest and youngest person in the organization? Or does generational leadership matter? How do leaders deal with different generations represented in their units?

This paper will explore the different generations that exist in the workplace today. From the 18-year-old E-1 to the 65-year-old civilian, there is a generational mix. How does a commander deal with this and ensure the talents of various generational groups are leveraged to ensure mission success? Generational awareness and ensuing leadership does, in fact, matter. Observe how the different generations communicate and there is no doubt that generational leadership does matter. After describing the different generational personalities, this paper will address why this matters to members of the armed forces and will examine some of the hot topics today that could possibly be dealt with differently based on the knowledge gained regarding different generations.

Those in the military understand the command structure and know how and when to salute smartly. This paper is not meant to replace the fundamental principles of leadership that a commander has learned over time. Rather, it is intended to be another tool for the commander. It is meant to raise the awareness on an issue that surrounds leaders in the workplace. Ultimately, if commanders can use this information to motivate all members of their unit, then a win-win situation ensues.

## THE GENERATIONAL GAP

Today's workplace is unique – it is a mix of race, religion, gender, education, personalities, and generations. With that comes different values, mind-sets, and views. This uniqueness is not necessarily a negative, but can cause issues if it isn't leveraged in a way that benefits each person and each workplace. As Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak point out in their book, *Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace*, "At no previous time in our history have so many and such different generations with such diversity been asked to work together shoulder to shoulder, side by side, cubicle to cubicle."<sup>2</sup> One generation alone can be difficult to deal with much less multiple ones that think and act differently and have different values! Each generation grew up in a different time with its own unique social conditions, events, and people affecting the way each generation approaches life.

While generations have worked together before, in the past, they "were sequestered from each other by organizational stratification and the structural topography of a manufacturing-oriented economy."<sup>3</sup> The old people were senior. The middle-aged people were mid-level managers. And the youngest and most junior workers were on the factory floor.<sup>4</sup> That's not the case anymore. The lines have blurred. In the corporate world, it is the first time generations have mixed positions in the workplace. In other words, this is the first time that age doesn't necessarily equate to seniority. In the military, there is a dual officer and enlisted hierarchy with generational mixes in both. It is, however, the first time the differences have been this vast. From World War II, Vietnam, and the civil rights movement to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the invention of the personal computer and 9/11, have changed the country and globe over the last 60 years!

In the military, a hierarchy still exists and generally speaking, the “older” generations are the ones in command billets. The “older” generations are the ones making the policy in the military. At the unit level, however, the mixing of generations does exist as a young second lieutenant could be in charge of an “old, crusty” senior non-commissioned officer and older non-commissioned officers in charge of younger troops. How does a leader get every generation to accomplish the mission? It is a truism in the armed forces that leaders say, “People are our most important asset.” Still, how is the mission accomplished with the generational differences that exist? Therefore, leaders must learn about their people – and that includes their differences. If leaders understand these differences, they can use them to motivate each person on the team thereby positively affecting mission accomplishment. If these differences are not understood and embraced, they can and will undermine mission effectiveness.

What is a generation? Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak say “In addition to the coincidence of birth, a generation is also defined by common tastes, attitudes, and experiences....”<sup>5</sup> And how long is a generation? According to generational experts Neil Howe and William Strauss, “the average length of a generation, keeping time with the phases of the human lifespan, is still around twenty or twenty-one years.”<sup>6</sup> Diverse experts have studied the different generations and most would agree that there are no hard and fast rules regarding the birth years associated with each generation. Just as people have different personalities based on the circumstances surrounding their upbringing, each generation has a personality that is defined by the events and conditions experienced during its formative years. Their personality is also “formed by the preceding generations based on what phase of life they are in, their own unique characteristics, and their intergenerational relationships.”<sup>7</sup> Generational personalities are thus influenced by those who preceded that generation – just take a look at a child and its parents and the amount of

influence – good and bad – the parents have on the child. Consequently, depending on which expert is studied, there are different names for each of the generations just as there is different birth years associated with them.

For the purposes of this paper, four generations are studied: Veterans (1922-1943), Baby Boomers (1943-1960), Generation Xers (1960-1980) and Millennials (1980-2000).<sup>8</sup> The four generations addressed span almost 80 years and represent a time like no other in our nation's history. As Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak point out, those decades include “three major wars, economic booms and busts, social upheavals, rocketing technological achievement, presidential impeachment, and the first steps beyond the boundaries of our planetary bonds.”<sup>9</sup>

## GENERATIONAL PERSONALITIES

### **Veterans (born between 1922 and 1943)<sup>10</sup>**

Also referred to as the *Greatest Generation*, *Traditionalists*, *Matures*, the *Schwarzkopf Generation* (in honor of General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of troops in DESERT STORM), or the *Silent Generation*, this group can be described as loyal, patriotic and hardworking.<sup>11</sup> According to Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak, “they are a generation whose vision and hard work created the United States as we know it today – a bold, powerful, prosperous, vital, modern democracy with all of its inherent challenges and paradoxes.”<sup>12</sup> This was evidenced by the nation's recovery from the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Korean War. “They formed their view of the world in the shadow of hard times and the bright light of America's triumph over them. They took up the challenge to rebuild the nation, the economy, and even war-torn Europe, to build a foundation that would allow future generations to live out the American Dream worldwide – or so they truly believed.”<sup>13</sup> This generation is “justifiably proud of their accomplishments in the fields of commerce and industry. And history

was their guide. They are the last of our current American generations to hold the past in such high esteem. In their view, the future is created by the past.”<sup>14</sup>

One third of this generation are veterans, hence one of its names.<sup>15</sup> Their experience in the military taught them that the chain of command was an efficient way of accomplishing things. This explains their tendency towards a “command and control” approach to leadership in the workplace. This approach is also how this generation will continue to influence the workplace for years to come. Zemke, Raines, Filipczak explain why:

The hierarchical method of running business was uniquely suited to armies and manufacturing. It worked best to have the brains at the top, in the executive ranks, and the brawn on the bottom, on the front lines. Top management, the generals, made the important decisions and passed them down the chain of command, where they were carried out without comment, respectfully and thoroughly. Thus, the most enduring workplace legacy of the Veterans is likely to be the old-style command-and-control leadership they learned in war, modified for peacetime, particularly manufacturing, and which they believe in their hearts is the only sane way to organize work – and society.<sup>16</sup>

A defining moment – defined by Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak as “an event so momentous that all members of the generation can tell you forever after where they were when the event took place”<sup>17</sup> – in the lives of the Veteran Generation was the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.<sup>18</sup> This was a day they would never forget – whether consciously aware of it or embedded in them by their elders. The bombing of Pearl Harbor further defined their generational personality.

So great was this generation that “their mind set has so dominated our culture that every other set of beliefs is weighed against theirs.”<sup>19</sup> Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak explain this influence further:

When people argue that we need a return to ‘family values,’ they mean we need to go back to the morality of the Veterans. When managers say young employees today lack a work ethic, they mean we don’t have the work ethic of the Veterans.

When we say, 'Parents aren't teaching values in the home anymore,' what we really mean is they're not teaching Veteran values.<sup>20</sup>

There's no doubt about it, this generation has set the standard against which other generations are assessed and valued.

Given the age of Veterans, it is unlikely any of them will be found on active duty in military organizations. However, some of them are still working in the civilian sector, in government, and within military organizations. As mentioned before, however, they are still very present as their mind-set and values have been imprinted on the following generations.

### **Baby Boomers (born between 1943 and 1960)**

About 45% of today's workforce, Baby Boomers can best be described as optimistic and competitive.<sup>21</sup> They are optimistic because they were born to parents of the Veteran Generation who wanted to provide opportunities and physical prosperity for their children that they did not have. They are competitive because Baby Boomers have the largest population with reports of anywhere from 73 to 80 million people – there was one baby born every 17 minutes for nearly 20 years – and therefore each member of this generation has had to compete with a whole host of others for any opportunity and success it had.<sup>22</sup> Success they were assured and assumed would be there.

The gap between this generation and the one before it widened with the "single most important arrival during the birth years of the Boom"<sup>23</sup> – the invention of the television! To put this invention in to perspective, "in 1952, *four* million televisions could be found in American homes. By 1960, the number was *fifty* million!"<sup>24</sup> Never before had a generation been so exposed growing up to so many issues on so many levels – from Vietnam to Watergate to the campus unrest such as the student protests and national guard response at Kent State to the

assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Needless to say, this certainly influenced this generation differently than the one before it.

As part of their competitive nature, Baby Boomers are driven and “willing to go the extra mile.” Their parents, based on their view of the world, also taught them that work was a privilege. In fact, “in the 1970s, the term ‘workaholic’ was coined to describe their work ethic. In the two decades since they joined the American workforce, the average time spent at work has increased one full month per year.”<sup>25</sup> This generation exemplifies the meaning of “live to work.” With the changes associated with the role of women in society, this is also the first generation where women were becoming part of the normal workplace. The result was an increase in dual income families.

The event that’s had a lasting impact on this generation was the Vietnam War. In the words of Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak, “its effect has been profound and divisive.”<sup>26</sup> This war divided the country. Those who fought or supported service members, willingly or unwillingly, didn’t know why they were fighting. If they made it home, they did not return to a hero’s welcome. Those that were left or stayed behind in the US questioned the decisions that were made by our country’s leadership. Some did anything they could do avoid being sent to Vietnam. The effects of this war aren’t over, either, as society still deals with homelessness and medical issues for its veterans. “Time does not, in fact, heal all wounds. The shadow of Vietnam and how it was viewed by whom will likely always loom over this generation.”<sup>27</sup>

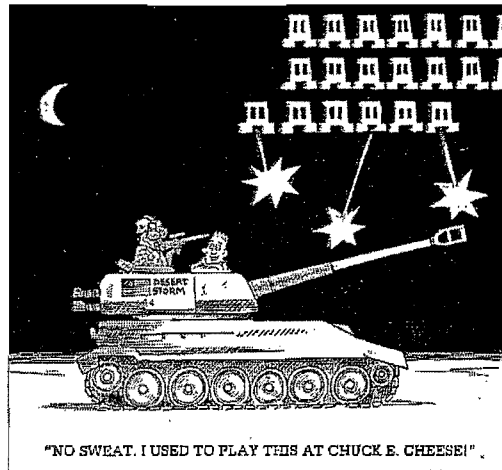
Today, organizations are led by a majority of Baby Boomers. In the military, in particular, the Baby Boomers are generally those who would be considered very “senior” leaders. They have been in the military for nearly 30 years and are the General/Flag Officers and senior non-commissioned officers of the armed forces.



## Generation X (born between 1960 and 1980)

With a population of 51 million, Generation Xers have the smallest population and grew up in the shadow of the overly populated Baby Boomers.<sup>28</sup> Self-reliant and skeptical can best describe this generation that's also known as *13<sup>th</sup> Generation* and *Post-Boomers*.<sup>29</sup> Because of the increase in dual income families and the highest divorce rates in history, Generation Xers were also the most unsupervised generation in the nation's history of young Americans.<sup>30</sup> They were "latch-key" children who adopted an "I can take care of myself" attitude because they were left to fend for themselves.<sup>31</sup> Their skepticism stems from "seeing every major American institution called into question. From the presidency and the military to organized religion and corporate America, name the institution and Xers can name the crime."<sup>32</sup> This generation watched as "America seemed to fail militarily, politically, diplomatically, and economically,"<sup>33</sup> they thought the American Dream was something of the past.<sup>34</sup>

While Baby Boomers had the invention of the television, Xers didn't "have enough fingers and toes to number the media that have sprung up during their lifetimes. Cable TV, digital TV, satellite TV, VCRs, video games, fax machines, microwaves, pagers, cell phones, PalmPilots, and of course, the most life-changing item of all: the personal computer."<sup>35</sup> These inventions have contributed to this generation's technological savviness and desire for most things instantaneously. They grew up learning how to work all of these inventions. It is second nature to them. The cartoon below from Neil Howe and Williams Strauss's book, *13th Gen: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?*, shows two young soldiers in the Persian Gulf in a tank. One is reassuring the other.<sup>36</sup>



Source: Howe, N., and B. Strauss. *13<sup>th</sup> Gen: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

Unlike their Boomer parents who “lived to work”, Gen Xers want to “work to live.” They watched their parents pay high prices for success: “stress and health problems, divorce, drug and alcohol abuse. And it didn’t look as if the companies to whom they had devoted all their time and energy appreciated their efforts. Layoffs were living proof.”<sup>37</sup> Therefore, Gen Xers want balance between their work and private lives. They believe in working smarter and not longer. As a general rule, they don’t want to stay late or work weekends. If they accomplish the task, does it matter where and when it is accomplished?

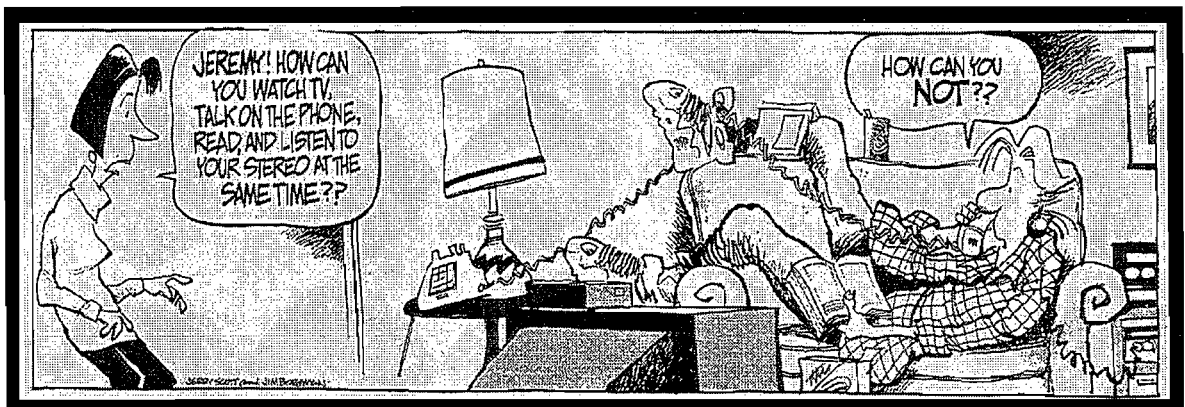
After watching their parents work so hard only to lose their jobs when companies downsized, they learned that they could only be loyal to themselves and not rely upon a big company or institution to provide for their future. They realized that employment with one company with a pension for a lifetime was something of the past.

### **Millennials (born between 1980 and 2000)**

The first generation to come of age in the new millennium, the Millennials are “the most overly scheduled generation in history – with before- and after-school activities, play dates, and so forth...”<sup>38</sup> Playing one sport isn’t enough for this generation...they played a sport every

season, played multiple instruments, lead the student council, maintained As and Bs in school, took college prep classes, and still found time for a part-time job. Is it any wonder why they're so good at multi-tasking? They have lived fast-paced lives long before they ever graduated from junior high!

Also called *Nexters*, *Generation Y*, and *Echo Boom*, Millennials can best be described as “confident, connected and open to change.”<sup>39</sup> They're confident because their Baby Boomer and Generation X parents praised them constantly and told them they could do anything. This generation is connected because they do not know life without the computer and Internet. It is commonplace to them. “According to IDC/Link Resources Corporation, a market-research firm in New York, 60 percent of all households with kids seven and under have PCs. These beeper-wearing cyberjunkies consider microwaves, CD players, VCRs, and computers as basic to home furnishings as other generations did the kitchen table.”<sup>40</sup> Let's not forget the second decade in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that has included YouTube, iPods, iPads, chat rooms, and blogging, too!



Source: “Leading Across Generations” briefing to SNCOA, email message to author, September 1, 2010.

The Internet has opened up a whole different world to them. They are more aware – although not necessarily more sophisticated – of things on a global level. Members of this generation are more socially conscious than previous generations at their age. For example, “local newspapers in 2005 were filled with stories about students collecting food, clothing, and

money for tsunami and hurricane victims just as they did in the aftermath of 9/11.”<sup>41</sup>

Additionally, the Internet and the constant barrage of media have exposed this generation to more cultures making them more accepting of them. “Unlike the Boomers who grew up in fairly homogeneous settings, the new crop of young people has much greater exposure to, and casual acceptance of, multiculturalism – a diversity of races, religions, and backgrounds.”<sup>42</sup> That’s a far cry from the 1960s when battles were fought for racial equality! Zenke, Raines, and Filipczak also point out data from the Census Bureau that says within this generation’s lifetime “ethnic ‘minorities’ as an aggregate will become the majority.”<sup>43</sup>

Just as Vietnam was to their Baby Boomer parents, a significant event in the lives of Millennials was the shooting massacre at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999 that left fifteen people dead. In a survey conducted in 1999 by Howe and Strauss of 660 Northern Virginia Class of 2000 students, “Millennial kids declared the Columbine shooting, together with its aftermath, to be the number-one event of their youth that they expect to remember all their lives.”<sup>44</sup> Howe and Strauss published their book in 2000, a year before 9/11. There’s no doubt that the terrorist attacks on US soil will be a date that this generation also remembers all their lives. In fact, this applies to all generations as generations view tragedies differently and are affected in various ways. For Millennials, Columbine was a reminder that nowhere was safe, not even their school. It also brought about a change on school campuses across America with police actively patrolling schools and security checks upon arrival at school. 9/11 further reemphasized that nowhere was safe, especially if terrorists could hijack planes and fly them in to buildings on US soil.

In his book, *Not Everyone Gets a Trophy – How to Manage Generation Y*, Bruce Tulgan describes this generation as “Gen X on fast-forward-with-self-esteem-on-steroids.”<sup>45</sup> According

to Howe and Strauss, “Never before in living memory has a generation been so celebrated, from conception to birth to preschool through elementary, middle, and high school. And the celebration could just be beginning.”<sup>46</sup>

### **Beyond the Millennials (2000-present) and Cuspers**

On the heels of the Millennials, the latest generation to be born (2000-present) is one yet to be named. Only time will tell the defining events in their lives and the description of their personality in future years. Given the pace at which technology continues to change, this generation will be a force with which to be reckoned. The changes in the world that they will see could quite possibly be even more vast than the differences currently between Millennials and Veterans. That said, every organization will need to reassess its methods of recruiting, training, rewarding, and retaining this particular workforce as they will bring their own challenges with them. Still, that is a challenge for later in the second and third decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Some generation experts also have a definition for groups that are positioned between two generations – Cuspers.<sup>47</sup> According to Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, there are three different groups of Cuspers today.<sup>48</sup> They are born towards the very end of or very beginning of their generation and have some tendencies from both generations. For the purposes of this research, these groups will not be studied.

There are those, too, that just don’t fit the “typical” description for their generation. Perhaps they were born in 1983 and think like someone in Generation X. Likewise, someone born in 1955 could think like a Veteran. However, it is important to note once again that there are no hard and fast rules regarding who is in which generation.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

There is no right or wrong generation. The key is that one's race, gender, age, religion, culture, upbringing, and yes, generation are but a few factors that contribute to the totality that makes each person unique, or who he or she really is. It's complex. It's "fuzzy." It's abstract. It's an issue that faces every organization and all leaders in it, including the nation's armed forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak point out, knowing generational information "often explains the baffling and confusing differences behind our unspoken assumptions underneath our attitudes."<sup>49</sup>

Over 65% of the armed forces are comprised of the Millennial Generation. Below is a chart with the breakdown of services by generation:

Service	Baby Boomers	Gen Xers	Millennials	Total end strength
USA <sup>50</sup>	4,770	197,680	361,625	564,075
USN <sup>51</sup>	3,640	124,650	209,110	337,400
USAF <sup>52</sup>	2,000	125,000	204,000	330,000
USMC <sup>53</sup>	1,800	40,200	160,000	202,000
Total	12,210	487,530	934,735	1,433,475

With a current active duty population of 202,000, 80% of the United States Marine Corps' population are Millennials! Conversely, less than 1% are Baby Boomers. The United States Air Force's current active duty population is approximately 330,000. Of that number, 62% are Millennials; 37.5% are Generation Xers; and less than 1% are Baby Boomers. While the Baby Boomers are the ones who wield most of the power in the armed forces via being in command assignments or key staff positions, it is necessary for them to know how other generations think and be aware of the generational disconnects that can occur throughout their units and the services as a whole.

How many times have the following phrases been heard – or possibly used:

“They have no work ethic. They’re slackers.”

“Back in my day...” or “In the old Corps...”

“I cannot attend meetings that start after 5 p.m. I have a life!”

“What’s the big deal about being a little late?”

These comments set the “perfect storm” for conflict within the workplace. The Baby Boomer boss/commander doesn’t understand why the Millennial employee/subordinate thinks the way they do. Likewise, the Millennial employee/subordinate wonders why their boss/commander is so uptight.

Based on the generational personalities, no wonder generational differences can cause misunderstandings and misperceptions, tension and friction in a military unit. Different generations communicate, work, and think differently. They seem to value different things. Ultimately, they just see the world differently, period. To members of these generations, it appears that their co-workers “just don’t get it” or aren’t on the “same sheet of music.” Leading this mix of generations is not easy; indeed, it becomes a challenge to lead so as to achieve mission accomplishment.

Given how each generation thinks, imagine the challenges in recruiting, training, rewarding, disciplining, and retaining a workforce. These same challenges apply to the military, regardless of service. There are many issues with which leaders must deal in their units. Several of them will be analyzed in the context of generational differences: feedback, mentoring, and combat.

## **Feedback**

Feedback is an integral part of any organization as it provides employees with expectations regarding performance and a realistic assessment of their performance. This, in

turn, ensures the development of the team members within the organization thereby helping the team accomplish the mission. In the military, feedback is essential to each service's various different performance evaluation systems (OPRs, OERs, fitreps, etc). Regardless of the specifics of a system, it is one of the most important things a leader can do.

Providing honest and useful feedback can be difficult. Sometimes, it is easy to forget about it. Supervisors get bogged down with their day-to-day activities and just don't think about giving feedback. Some people are reluctant to give negative feedback. However, if the organization is to succeed, all kinds of feedback are necessary. In the Air Force, feedback is mandatory twice a year for most Airmen<sup>54</sup> – within 60 days of the start of supervision and again half way between the start of supervision and the due date of the performance evaluation. It can – and should – be given at other times but only those two instances must be documented.

Just as they communicate differently, different generations view feedback differently. How they perceive feedback can be linked to how they communicate. One method does not apply to everyone. For Veterans (few now serving), they're content to receive feedback only when it's necessary (i.e. "no news is good news").<sup>55</sup> Remember, they are also called the Silent Generation and very much believed in the top down approach to leadership in an organization. They also communicated with the handwritten memo as technology was not as advanced as it is today. Therefore, it took time for one to write anything, especially if it was negative feedback.

For the largest generation in the workplace, Baby Boomers want feedback to know how they measured up against their peers. Because there are so many of them, they need to know where they stand. They are competitive! Therefore, they came up with the "once-a-year performance appraisal, with lots of documentation in the file."<sup>56</sup> This made the Silent (Veteran) Generation provide feedback. To help make them more comfortable with feedback, "there were



forms to be filled out in advance with numerical rating systems that made feedback less subjective...”<sup>57</sup>

Generation Xers are used to having instant access to everything. They grew up in an era where they didn’t have to wait for much. If they needed money from the bank, they went to the ATM. If they needed to shop, they could do it online. If they needed info on a particular subject, they could search for it online. They are not used to waiting. Therefore, it’s no surprise that they want feedback instantly and they’re not afraid to interrupt their boss and ask for it. They “want to monitor their performance at work the way they monitor their bank accounts with ATMs – instantly, exactly, and often” and they’re not afraid to ask for it.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, the Millennials want feedback just as quickly as the Gen Xers, but they’re looking for it even more quickly than Generation Xers. Why not? They’re used to instant messaging! They don’t want to have to wait on someone or interrupt someone or have to ask someone for the feedback. Additionally, Millennials need positive reinforcement when given feedback (remember...their parents did this for them growing up so they’re used to it and need it).

Each generation varies in how they view feedback and this can be a point of tension within a unit. If feedback is not given or received, the unit will not be able to improve to achieve its mission. Likewise, feedback doesn’t have to be just one way – from the top down. It can – and should – go in the other direction. Different generations also vary in how they view *giving* feedback. Veterans rarely will speak up or question why something is done the way it is. Millennials, on the other hand, question just about everything! They don’t do this out of disrespect...they’re just curious. Unfortunately, due to their youth and inexperience, it can come across as such.

Giving or receiving feedback is an important aspect in any unit. Not only does it ensure the members of the unit are performing to the standards necessary to accomplish the mission, but it also provides the chain of command feedback on ways to improve within the unit. Perhaps there's a smarter way to do things that the chain of command hasn't thought about it!<sup>59</sup>

## **Mentoring**

Just as the different generations communicate and view feedback differently, there are similar views when it comes to mentoring. Mentoring can occur at all levels throughout the unit. Believe it or not, the boss/commander can learn something new, too, despite the old adage, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks!" Be aware of the generational differences so that mentoring can actually occur.

For example, Veterans may be somewhat resistant to receiving mentoring from a Generation Xer. Meanwhile, Millennials are more open to mentoring. They are used to having parents that were very active in their life and who therefore provided constant mentoring to them. They don't want this to stop when they enter the work force. Baby Boomers and Gen Xers are also open to mentoring, but for different reasons. Baby Boomers "like mentors because they think it will put them on the promotional fast track. Xers like mentors because they are a kind of surrogate parent, someone who cares about them and will support them."<sup>60</sup> This comes from their generational personality. Boomers are all about work, so the promotional fast track appeals to them while Gen Xers were the latch-key children who were unsupervised. Therefore, someone showing interest in them appeals to them. The key is to make sure the mentor and the mentee understand the other's views so that mentoring can actually occur vice miscommunication, bad feelings, and tension.

## Combat

Ever since the events of September 11, 2001, this nation has been in a defacto war. The country has a generation of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen that know nothing but war. They have deployed multiple times, spent many months (if not years) away from their families, and they have suffered injuries or watched their brothers-in-arms pay the ultimate price associated with the profession of arms. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, has asserted, “this is the most combat-tested force in US history.”<sup>61</sup> The society from which they come knows very little about the military. According to the Pew Research Center, the percentage of Millennial men with military service is “notably lower (2%) than it is among older generations when they were ages 18 to 28. The share of veterans ranges from 6% for Gen Xers to 13% for Boomers to 24% for the Silent (Veteran) Generation.”<sup>62</sup> This will affect the lives of Millennials for years to come.

On one hand, Millennials are suited well to deal with today’s asymmetric warfare. In an article titled “Millennials Merging: Leading a New Generation in War,” LtCol Wayne Sinclair writes, “America’s youth may actually be better prepared to prevail in the irregular conflicts of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century than any previous generation.”<sup>63</sup> Millennials are used to multitasking – in fact, they know no other way – and they’re used to working in teams. They have traits that will serve them well as the country continues to fight in Afghanistan and against terrorism. On the other hand, what Millennials may be lacking when they return home is the ability to cope with any sort of “failure.” That “failure” can be an inability to adjust to a peacetime environment, the death of a buddy in battle, or a missing limb. As discussed earlier, Millennials are used to having parents actively involved in their life. Their parents coddled them. They never let them fail. This has created a generation that is not used to dealing with failure of any type.

Unfortunately, that means they may not be able to deal with some of the effects of combat. The same goes for their spouses. What is needed is a resilient person. The Army has instituted Resilience Training (reference Appendix B) and some Air Force major commands have instituted the Comprehensive Airman Fitness program (reference Appendix B). Both programs are aimed at providing personnel and their families with the skills to face challenges and deal with adversity successfully.

This is not to suggest that the other generations are exempt from this. It simply means that based on an understanding of them, Millennials have been overprotected while growing up. Millennials have seen nothing but war during their time in the military. Combine these two factors and all leaders need to be concerned about the effects of combat on the service member and their families and their successful reintegration once they return home.

An issue dealing with different generations and combat currently being debated within the Marine Corps today is the wear of the crossed rifles on the rank insignia for lance corporals through master sergeants. Every Marine is a rifleman, after all. In an article in the *Marine Corps Times*, the question of whether the crossed rifles should be reserved for infantry Marines only is addressed – “Infantry Marines, mainly in the junior enlisted and noncommissioned officer ranks, are openly challenging this long-held assertion. Some say it’s obvious, based on mission alone, that every Marine is *not*, in fact, a rifleman.”<sup>64</sup> However, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, along with other senior leadership, disagrees saying, “MOS does not make a Marine.”<sup>65</sup> If this is looked at as a generational issue, one can see where the tension comes from. For the junior enlisted – the Millennials – their parents reminded them that they are special and can be anything they want to be. They also like to express themselves. Pew Research data shows that Millennials “embrace multiple modes of self-expression. Nearly four-in-ten have a

tattoo and half those have two to five and 18% have six or more.”<sup>66</sup> “Special” and “expressive” Millennials want something that sets them apart from their peers. This can lead to a debate over crossed rifles on the rank insignia. Conversely, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps and other senior leadership are Baby Boomers who don’t understand why crossed rifles are being questioned, for “a Marine is a Marine.” This is a perfect example of a generational conflict that could take precious time and resources away from mission accomplishment if not addressed.

These are but a few issues where generational differences can cause tension in the workplace/military units and ultimately, affect mission effectiveness. There are many others.<sup>67</sup> Not all of them are bad differences. The key, however, is that with a basic idea on how each generation is different, how can these be leveraged by a commander to make a unit stronger?

### **CONNECTING THE GENERATIONAL GAP**

Senior officers and senior non-commissioned officers are from one generation while junior officers and non-commissioned officers are from different ones.<sup>68</sup> Yet, the task still remains for a commander to lead his/her unit. Given this challenge, how does a commander overcome it? In an article titled “Learning to Bridge the Generation Gap in the Workplace,” the author states “by understanding, recognizing, and appreciating the differences, not only can conflict be avoided but value and opportunity can be found in utilizing generational differences to a workplace advantage.”<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, leaders should not only appreciate these generational differences, but they should embrace them. This will, in turn, build a diverse team that is focused on the mission rather than on their differences.

The generational gap will never be closed entirely. However, it can be connected, bridged, or tightened, but given that each generation has a personality that is defined by the events and conditions experienced during its formative years, a single basic generational entity

will not develop. Nonetheless, that is reality and acceptable as long as leaders understand, recognize, and embrace these differences.

Generations, as a whole, view things differently based on their “age location in history” and each generation’s collective mind-set cannot help but influence them.<sup>70</sup> It is hard to understand one’s own generation much less another one. If, however, leaders take the time to understand that there are different personalities across the generations, they will understand that one generation is not entirely right or wrong. In an article titled, “Manage Generational Differences,” Jamie Notter says “the power of generational differences can only be harnessed if time is taken to understand in more depth where these differences come from and how they play out in today’s society.”<sup>71</sup> Once a leader understands that these differences are not necessarily personal in nature, they can then recognize what causes the miscommunication, misperception, and tension. For example, they’ll know that the 25-year-old Millennial Staff Sergeant asking questions does not mean to challenge their Generation X Lieutenant Colonel commander, but instead is asking because he or she truly does not know the answer. Or what about the Baby Boomer General who complains that the Millennial Airman is a slacker and does not have a work ethic? Recognizing the generational differences allows the Baby Boomer General to understand that the Millennial Airman is not a slacker but rather someone who values their work-life balance and would like to have a life outside of duty. Understanding and recognizing the generational differences will help leaders of all ranks embrace these differences and help them find the positives in these differences. Ultimately, “Generationally savvy organizations value the differences between people and look at differences as strengths.”<sup>72</sup>

The key to all of these steps – understanding, recognizing, and embracing – is respect and communication. This is nothing new for a commander/supervisor as these are basic tenets of

leadership. Regardless of the differences in each generation, all people want to be respected. Each person that makes up a generation has his or her own values, mind-sets, and views. So does each generation. These were formed based on the influences in their lives and, therefore, there is no right or wrong generation. As long as leaders respect their people and what they have to offer, they will be able to understand, recognize, and embrace the generational gap. Given the differences amongst the generations, too much communication can never be a bad thing. A leader that communicates with his/her unit will help the organization overcome these differences and focus on the mission.

## CONCLUSIONS

All members of the Armed Forces are products of many different factors – background, culture, and race to name only three. The generation in which a person grew up also provides some insight in to how he or she thinks about things. As described above, there are differences in how each generation operates and views life. Based on these differences, misunderstandings, tensions, and even disagreements can occur. This, in turn, affects how service members are led to accomplish the mission.

Generational misunderstandings happen all the time on a personal level – anyone with teenagers can certainly attest to that! Imagine the effect of generational misunderstandings at the organizational level. As Lynne Lancaster and David Stillman point out in their book, *When Generations Collide. Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work*, “Think how costly they (generational misunderstandings) can be at the institutional level when companies have to set policies, develop procedures, and create everything from corporate cultures to compensation and benefit plans.”<sup>73</sup> Think how costly they can be if two people misunderstand each other and that gets in the way of productivity and mission accomplishment.

Think how costly they can be if someone does not hear the feedback given because it was spoken in another generational and values language.

The next time a senior enlisted advisor stands in front of a unit, remember this...today's kids have no memory of Vietnam, Watergate, the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, or the Cold War. Their "faces go blank when you tell them to roll down the car window, turn the channel, press the carriage return, or quit sounding like a broken record."<sup>74</sup> As Bruce Tulgan points out in his book *Managing the Generation Mix From Urgency to Opportunity*, "age has taken its place beside gender, race, and culture as a way to define what binds some groups of people together and drives other groups absolutely crazy."<sup>75</sup> Generational leadership does, in fact, matter. In the end, the leader's job is to motivate those within their units to accomplish the mission. Understanding, recognizing, and embracing how the different generations view the world around them will assist leaders at every level in leading their people – our most important asset – and therefore, capitalize on their strengths and skills for mission effectiveness and accomplishment.



## Appendix A

### Generational Diversity

	Veterans (1922-1943)	Baby Boomers (1943-1960)	Generation X (1960-1980)	Millennials (1980-2000)
Also known as	Greatest Generation, Traditionalists, Matures, Schwarzkopf Generation, Silent Generation		13 <sup>th</sup> Generation, Post-Boomers	Nexters, Generation Y, Echo Boom
Attributes	Loyal, Patriotic & Hardworking	Optimistic & Competitive	Self-reliant & Skeptical	Confident, Connected, and Open to change
Defining moments	Great Depression, Second World War, Korean War, Pearl Harbor	Vietnam War		Columbine High School, 9/11
Work	Command and control approach to leadership	Workaholic, Live to work	Work to live	
Society		Largest population	Smallest population, Most unsupervised generation of young Americans	Most overly scheduled generation, More accepting of diversity
Media		Invention of TV	Personal computer	Technologically savvy

\*This is a visual representation of all data in the narrative of this paper. Specific citations can be found throughout the text.

## Appendix B

### Resilience Training

#### **Army's Resilience Training**

Below is a definition of the Army's Resilience Training:

Resilience Training:

Offers strength-based, positive psychology tools to aid Soldiers, Leaders and Families in their ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity. Training and information is targeted to all phases of the Soldier deployment cycle, Soldier life cycle and Soldier support system.

Information found at: <https://www.resilience.army.mil/>

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#### **Air Force's Comprehensive Airman Fitness Program**

Below is a definition of Air Mobility Command's program:

The goal of Comprehensive Airman Fitness is to help our Airmen, Air Force civilians and family members become more resilient and better-equipped to deal with the rigors of military life. We do this by promoting:

- Positive Behaviors -- Caring, Committing, Connecting, Communicating and Celebrating.
- Holistic Health -- Mental Fitness, Physical Fitness, Social Fitness and Spiritual Fitness.

Information found at: <http://www.amc.af.mil/caf/>

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In researching for this paper, the author found several good books with much background information on the different types of generations. There is plentiful assessment on the different generations in corporate America. However, there is very little on generations and the military.

Two favorites were Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman's *When Generations Collide. Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work* and Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak's *Generations at Work. Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace*. Both books were easy to read and provided great descriptions of the generations. In fact, the descriptions were so good and so real that one could actually visualize the conversations and disconnects between generations.

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Francis Ford Coppola and Edmund H. North, *Patton* (Beverly Hills, CA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2001), DVD.
- <sup>2</sup> Headquarters U.S. Air Force, *Leadership and Force Development*, AFDD1-1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Air Force, 18 February 2006), 1.
- <sup>2</sup> Ron Zemke, Claire Raines and Bob Filipczak, *Generations at Work. Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace* (New York, N.Y.: AMACOM, 2000), 10.
- <sup>3</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 10.
- <sup>4</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 10.
- <sup>5</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 16.
- <sup>6</sup> Neil Howe and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising. The Next Great Generation* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 2000), 42.
- <sup>7</sup> Wayne A. Sinclair, "Millennials Merging: Leading a New Generation in War," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90: 71-75 (September 2006), 71.
- <sup>8</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 3.
- <sup>9</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 18.
- <sup>10</sup> These inclusive dates are used by Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak in their book *Generations at Work. Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace*. Based on their research, they found people born between 1943 and 1946 have values and views closer to the Baby Boomers than they do the Veterans, so they group the Veterans together from 1922-1943 and the Baby Boomers from 1943-1960. As stated in the paper, different authors have different opinions on when exactly the generations start and end. What they do agree upon is the general characteristics of a particular generation.
- <sup>11</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 24; and Carolyn A. Martin, Ph.D. and Bruce Tulgan. *Managing the Generation Mix. From Urgency to Opportunity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Amherst, Massachusetts: HRD Press, Inc., 2006), 3.
- <sup>12</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 29.
- <sup>13</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 36.
- <sup>14</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 231.

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- <sup>15</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 38.
- <sup>16</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 41.
- <sup>17</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 33.
- <sup>18</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 33.
- <sup>19</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 30.
- <sup>20</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 30.
- <sup>21</sup> Winzenburg, Vanessa and Ron Magnus, "Understanding Generational Leadership Styles." [http://www.di.net/articles/archive/understanding\\_generational\\_leadership/](http://www.di.net/articles/archive/understanding_generational_leadership/) (accessed January 8, 2011); and Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 65.
- <sup>22</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 64.
- <sup>23</sup> Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, *When Generations Collide. Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work* (New York, N.Y.: HarperCollins, 2002), 21.
- <sup>24</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 21.
- <sup>25</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 85.
- <sup>26</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 69.
- <sup>27</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 71.
- <sup>28</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 94.
- <sup>29</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 24.
- <sup>30</sup> Martin and Tulgan, *Managing the Generation Mix*, 39-40.
- <sup>31</sup> Martin and Tulgan, *Managing the Generation Mix*, 39-40.
- <sup>32</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 25.
- <sup>33</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 96.
- <sup>34</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 96.

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- <sup>35</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 25.
- <sup>36</sup> Neil Howe and Bill Strauss, *13<sup>th</sup> Gen. Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1993), 205.
- <sup>37</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 99.
- <sup>38</sup> Carolyn A. Martin, Ph.D. and Bruce Tulgan, *Managing the Generation Mix. From Collision to Collaboration*. (Amherst, Massachusetts: HRD Press, Inc., 2002), 66.
- <sup>39</sup> PewResearchCenter, "The Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change." <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/>, February 2010; and Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 24; and Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 27.
- <sup>40</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 136.
- <sup>41</sup> Martin and Tulgan, *Managing the Generation Mix*, 55.
- <sup>42</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 137.
- <sup>43</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 137.
- <sup>44</sup> Neil Howe and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising. The Next Great Generation* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 2000), 39-40.
- <sup>45</sup> Bruce Tulgan, *Not Everyone Gets A Trophy. How to Manage Generation Y* (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 6.
- <sup>46</sup> Howe and Strauss, *Millennials Rising*, 40.
- <sup>47</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 36.
- <sup>48</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 36.
- <sup>49</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 14.
- <sup>50</sup> Defense Manpower Data Center, email message to author, March 2, 2011.
- <sup>51</sup> Officer and Enlisted by Age spreadsheet. Navy Recruiting Command, email message to author, February 22, 2011.
- <sup>52</sup> Air Force Personnel Center, Secure Applications, <https://w20.afpc.randolph.af.mil/AFPCSecureNet20/CheckPortal.aspx> (accessed on January 16, 2011).



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<sup>53</sup> Matthew Morgan, "Strategic Communication" (lecture, Marine Corps University, Quantico, VA, January 11, 2011).

<sup>54</sup> Airmen with a capital "A" refers to all Airmen in the United States Air Force regardless of rank just like Marine refers to anyone in the United States Marine Corps.

<sup>55</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 255.

<sup>56</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 256.

<sup>57</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 256.

<sup>58</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 258.

<sup>59</sup> The Germans changed tactical offensive and defensive doctrine in this manner from 1916-1918, which helped them on the battlefield.

<sup>60</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 123.

<sup>61</sup> Jim Garamone, "Mullen: Leadership Key to Nation's, Military's Future," JCS.mil, January 3, 2011, <http://www.jcs.mil/newsarticle.aspx?ID=492> (accessed January 15, 2011).

<sup>62</sup> PewResearchCenter, "The Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change." <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/>, February 2010.

<sup>63</sup> Wayne A. Sinclair, "Millennials Merging: Leading a New Generation in War," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90: 71-75 (September 2006), 71.

<sup>64</sup> Tony Lombardo, "Grunts Only? Should crossed rifles be reserved for infantry? That question is dividing the Corps," *Marine Corps Times*, March 14, 2011.

<sup>65</sup> Lombardo, "Grunts Only?", *Marine Corps Times*, March 14, 2011.

<sup>66</sup> PewResearchCenter, "The Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change." <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/>, February 2010.

<sup>67</sup> Other generational differences that can cause tension include, but are not limited to: work ethic, finances, respect for authority, work/life balance, work environment, dress, retirement, leadership style, communication, recruiting, rewards, training, and career development.

<sup>68</sup> Although none to few active duty personnel are from the Veteran generation, there are still some in executive and legislative positions, as well as within higher headquarters or base organizations – a "command" position or military personnel may be reporting on them.

<sup>69</sup> Accord and Collaboration Dispute Resolution Services, "Learning to Bridge the Generation

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Gap in the Workplace.” <http://dknapp.wordpress.com/2008/03/29/learning-to-bridge-the-generation-gap-in-the-workplace/> (accessed February 24, 2011).

<sup>70</sup> William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations. The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069* (New York, N.Y.: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1991), 32.

<sup>71</sup> Jamie Notter, “Manage Generational Differences.” <http://www.notterconsulting.com/Articles/manage-generations.html> (accessed February 6, 2011).

<sup>72</sup> Zemke, Raines and Filipczak, *Generations at Work*, 154.

<sup>73</sup> Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide*, 12.

<sup>74</sup> Howe and Strauss, *Millennials Rising*, 24.

<sup>75</sup> Martin and Tulgan, *Managing the Generation Mix*, xix.